

# Volunteering Better Than Housework!

By Maurishire Akabidavis, Summer Youth Volunteer

Let me take you back to 1976. Dottie Lewis has just joined the AMVETS auxiliary, her first taste of volunteering action. Her husband played cards with the patients at night, keeping them entertained, as she wrote notes, postcards, and letters for the patients that couldn't. Ever since then, Lewis couldn't get enough of volunteering.

Now, thirty-two years later, Lewis is still doing what she loves.

"Any excuse to avoid housework is fine by me," she says, laughing as she works at the information desk of the Ralph H. Johnson Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

That's where Lewis can usually be found, "manning" the front desk, in the center of all the commotion. She gives out information like a doctor gives out lollipops to children after an appointment, with a constant

smile that never leaves her face no matter how hurried the passers-by are. Her job is one that comes with gratitude and the occasional bout of excitement, and that's exactly why she loves it so much.



"It's never the same any two days," Lewis said about her volunteer work at the hospital.

"I could never work in an assembly line!" she added.

Lewis' versatility allows her to go with the flow of change and enjoy herself while doing so. It also lets her interact with the volunteer staff.

"I like the staff," Lewis said about those frequent volunteers she has come to know.

Working at the hospital as long as she has, Lewis knows how rewarding volunteering can be. She goes out of her way to make help the veterans no matter what their problems are. Because of her years of working at the hospital, Lewis has learned the inner workings of this hospital like the back of her hand. Her presence at the front desk keeps people informed and in tune to the hospital and everything that goes on within it.

For Lewis, volunteering isn't just something to do to pass the time; it's something important that helps others. To Lewis, volunteering defines who you are as a person.



These extraordinary **Youth Volunteers** signed on to complete 100 hours of service to our Veterans during their summer vacations. Now that's the beginning of a fantastic back-to-school essay!

Pictured (left to right, back row, name and volunteer area): Chris Nash, Police and Security; Tevin King, Canteen Service; Marcus Shuler, Urology Clinic; Tajal Jenkins, Voluntary Service; James Lobbestael, Research; Tyler Wozniak, Quality Management; (left to right, front row) Justin Coles, Voluntary Service; Jordan Lobbestael, Nursing Service; Jocelyn Rodgers, Pharmacy Service; Raven Wright, Human Resources; Kristina Jouse, Fee Basis; Myisheia Bennett, Escort Service (not pictured); Dominic Albanese, Nursing Service; Stephen Huang, Research.

## Financial Contributions Go Far To Help Vets

The Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) manages the many gifts and donations provided by generous and caring donors wishing to support our Nation's veterans. VAVS volunteers, community and civic groups, corporations, veteran service organizations, and individuals are among the many contributors of monetary and in-kind donations to the VA.

The generosity of our donors provide supplemental resources needed to support programs and services for veterans and their families that otherwise would not be available.

Through financial contributions to VA, you enable

us to purchase the most urgently needed items that directly help support veteran programs such as transporta-



Food purchased with financial contributions during Stand Down 2007.

tion services, social service assistance, recreation activities, rehabilitation equipment, homeless veteran services; comfort items; holiday gifts; phone cards and much more.

For example, financial contributions help the VA purchase food for homeless veterans during the VA's annual Stand Down event, held Oct. 30-31.

When you give to the VA, you are making a positive difference in a veteran's life. Your financial support can help us to better serve veterans, and provide the resources that will help to improve the lives of our Nation's ill and disabled veterans.

We invite you to learn more about the ways you can help by giving to VA, or by volunteering. You can know first hand the satisfaction that comes from selflessly giving to those who gave of themselves to serve our country!

## Volunteer Positions Needed:

1. DAV Drivers
2. DAV Office Assistant
3. ICU Waiting Room Liaison
4. Bagel Cart Servers
5. Coffee Cart Servers
6. Book Cart Delivery Person
7. Human Resources Helper
8. ICE - Veteran Feedback Solicitor
9. Information Desk Attendant
10. Voting Registration Liaison

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### *Stand Down*

Set up will be held on Oct. 29 and the event will be held during Oct. 30 - 31. If you would like to volunteer or donate financial contributions, please call Carolyn at 789-7488.

*Veterans Day Parade*  
Nov. 9 - Want to help?  
Call Carolyn 789-7488.

*National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans*  
"Sweet Heart Concert"  
February 13 at 7:00 pm  
at the Cultural and Civic Arts Auditorium.



## New Van Added to Charleston DAV Fleet!



The old Summerville DAV van was recently forced to retire after many years, and many miles, of loyal service. Recognizing the importance of the service to the Veterans who depend on the shuttle, Charleston DAV Chapter 17 donated this brand new replacement! Thanks so much!

### DAV Van Changes for Summerville Route

In order to provide time efficient and cost (gas) effective service to our veterans, we regretfully will no longer be able to pick up veterans at personal residences along the Summerville DAV van route. Instead, this van route will be operated as all other routes in the Charleston VAMC district with designated pick-up/drop off (PU/DO) points.

PU/DO points will be the best way to ensure the maximum number of veterans can use this service while ensuring that all riders make their appointments on time.

Riders will still need to call Harriett Hudson (HSC) at (843) 789-7307 to make reservations on the Summerville van. Ms. Hudson work with the riders to choose the most appropriate PU/DO point and give approximate van arrival times.

As always, riders should tell hospital appointment schedulers that they are a DAV rider and need the earliest appointment available. DAV riders who accept appointments later than 1:30 pm should be prepared to furnish their own transportation home. The DAV will depart the medical center no later than 3:00 pm.

Because you are former service members we know that you are familiar with personal sacrifice for the greater good. We ask for your patience and understanding during this transition. Again, thank you for your support!



## DAV Van Driver Commended for Long Road of Service

Joseph Hardee, a Loris DAV Van Driver, recently received a National Commander's Citation from that organization for a fantastic achievement! Hardee has surpassed the 150,000 miles driven mark in his volunteer post.

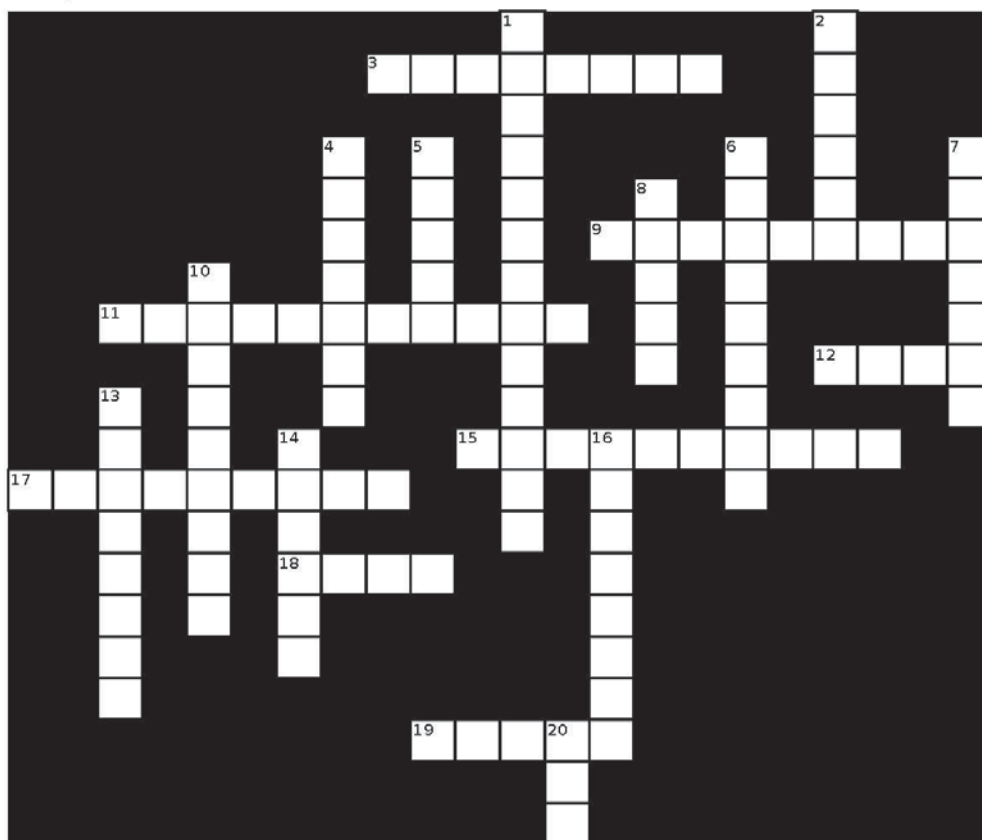
Hardee's dedication to driving the DAV van from Loris to Charleston has benefitted countless veterans needing to travel to the main VA Center for specialty care, but without the means to get there.

The commendation notes Hardee's "selfless devotion and steadfast commitment to America's disabled Veterans." Hardee has been driving the Loris DAV van for nearly 15 years!



**Hey Veterans!**  
**Uncle Sam wants**  
**YOU**  
**to vote!**

**Not Sure How?**  
**Call 789-7488**



### Across

- 3 The \_\_\_\_\_ Transition team helps our OIF/OEF Vets  
 9 They're the heart of the hospital!  
 11 Horry county CBOC  
 12 June 6, 1944  
 15 Our CBOC getting ready to share new space with the Navy  
 17 What we do against homelessness in the fall  
 18 What we pledge allegiance to  
 19 First name of the VAMC's namesake



### Down

- 1 This department went 24 hours last fall  
 2 Third floor location where volunteers move patients  
 4 Where our volunteers redeem their meal tickets in Charleston  
 5 Not a strong wind - but certainly a force in the VS office!  
 6 They donate the bagels!  
 7 First name of Volunteer Services Chief  
 8 These volunteers show up when schools out!  
 10 Location where most Vets first see a volunteer - say hi Dottie!  
 13 Our smallest CBOC  
 14 regular or decaf  
 16 Our most southern CBOC  
 20 Yearly check all volunteers must complete

## Zucchini Bread

*Yield: 2 loaves*

- 2 cups sugar  
 1 cup vegetable oil  
 4 eggs  
 3 tsp. vanilla  
 2 cups grated zucchini  
 2 ½ cups flour  
 1 tsp. salt

- 1 tsp. baking soda  
 ¼ tsp. baking powder  
 1 tsp. nutmeg  
 2 tsp. cinnamon  
 1 cup chopped walnuts (optional)

Cream together sugar and oil. Stir in zucchini, vanilla and beaten eggs. In another bowl mix together flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, nutmeg and

cinnamon. Mix dry ingredients into the zucchini mixture until blended. Stir in walnuts (optional).

Place in greased loaf pans. Bake in preheated 350 degree oven for 45 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center of loaf comes out clean.

*Tip – fresh grated zucchini can be frozen and used all year long!*